



November 20, 2007

Dear Colleague:

I am pleased to announce today's publication of "*Health Disparities in HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Tuberculosis in the US: Issues, Burden and Response*." This report was developed with support from the Divisions of HIV/AIDS Prevention, Viral Hepatitis, Sexually Transmitted Diseases Prevention, and Tuberculosis Elimination, as well as state and territorial health departments and community-based partners.

The report presents a retrospective review of CDC surveillance data for HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and tuberculosis (TB) over the period of 2000-2004, and summarizes selected programmatic, educational and research activities implemented to reduce disparities in these diseases. Despite significant progress in the prevention of these diseases, some populations continue to endure a disproportionate burden of disease. For example, while blacks represent approximately 13 percent of the U.S. population, they account for approximately half of the more than one million Americans currently living with HIV.

Reducing health disparities is one of the priorities of the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention. With this report, we are embarking on a series of activities designed to increase awareness in those communities that are disproportionately affected by these disparities, and encourage the development of new tools and approaches. Eliminating disparities in HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis, STD and TB by gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation or geographic location will require new knowledge about the factors that contribute to these disparities (e.g., poverty, unequal access to care, education). It also will require enhanced methods for disease prevention and health promotion, as well as new approaches to engage our partners and mobilize affected communities.

I encourage you to share this report with other organizations in your communities and to join me and my colleagues at the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention in our efforts to reduce disparities in HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis, STDs and TB in the United States.

Sincerely,

Kevin A. Fenton, MD, PhD, FFPH

Director

National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis,
STD, and TB Prevention

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/nchhstp